



May 20, 2004

Life imprisonment for crack cocaine trafficker

Charles Brown ran a “green light” crack house on Burnside Street in Providence

A federal judge today sentenced **Charles Brown**, 32, of Providence, to life in prison for dealing crack cocaine out of a house on Burnside Street in Providence. The house featured video surveillance and a green-red light combination on the back porch, which detectives believe signaled whether the dealers were open for business.

The Office of the United States Attorney announced the sentence, which U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi imposed in U.S. District Court, Providence. The amount of crack cocaine involved in the trafficking conspiracy – 164 grams – coupled with Brown’s criminal record – two prior convictions for drug trafficking – subjected him to life imprisonment under federal drug trafficking law. Two codefendants in the trafficking conspiracy were sentenced to federal prison terms last month: **Charles Isler**, 33, to 262 months and **Bilal Abdul Rashid**, 28, to 210 months.

In February, a jury found Isler, Brown, and Rashid guilty of conspiracy to distribute cocaine base (crack). During the trial, Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein presented evidence that the Providence Police Narcotics, Firearms and Organized Crime Bureau began investigating activities at 178 Burnside Street last year after receiving complaints about suspected drug trafficking.

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In June 2003, Detective Scott Partridge conducted surveillance on the house and observed that the rear entrance to the first floor apartment had a rectangular slot in the door that could be used for drug transactions. The entrance was a double door, fortified with a steel gate. The house was equipped with surveillance cameras. There were a green lamp and a red lamp in the back hallway.

On June 3, Narcotics Bureau detectives executed a search warrant for the first floor apartment. After ramming the outside door and prying open an inner door – and after a brief struggle – detectives arrested Brown, Isler, and Rashid. In the kitchen, detectives observed a split screen video monitor displaying four camera views of the perimeter of the house.

Detectives seized a brown paper bag containing 142 grams of crack cocaine and various items used in the packaging and sale of crack cocaine. In an overflowing toilet in the bathroom, detectives found 26 baggies containing about 6 grams of crack. In a car outside the apartment, detectives found a Cheese Puffs carton containing about 16 grams of crack cocaine. A detective had earlier observed Brown arrive in the car and take a package out of the Cheese Puffs container. The total weight of the crack cocaine seized was 164 grams.

Brown owned and lived at 178 Burnside Street. Isler's address of record is 48 Glenham Street, and Rashid's is 138 Linwood Avenue.

The **Providence Police Narcotics, Firearms and Organized Crime Bureau** and the **Drug Enforcement Administration** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Goldstein is prosecuting it.

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